

Background

As part of its Strategic Plan, FIH is committed to introducing a new global competition, which all members will be eligible to play in. This new competition, for the time being, will be known as the FIH World League and it is envisaged that it will be an attractive proposition for potential partners. Not only will this give the opportunity for all countries to play in more international competition, it will also support the FIH's strategic intention to "close the playing gap" between the top performing countries and the rest of the FIH's members. In future, the FIH World League will be the vehicle by which FIH will determine which countries will play in the following Olympic Games or World Cup, alongside the host and continental champions.

Definition of the competition

The FIH World League will commence every even year. The competition format will be based over 4 rounds. The FIH will invite all National Associations to enter and, at the same time, to submit offers to host a Round 1 and/or Round 2 tournament. The choice of hosts for these tournaments will be made by the FIH Bid Evaluation Committee. Hosts for Rounds 3 and 4 will be determined by the FIH Executive Board in accordance with the aims of the FIH Strategic Plan. Rounds 3 and 4 will be played in the FIH windows and wherever possible so too will Round 2.

The competition will be used to determine the 6 / 7 places in the Olympic Games and FIH World Cup to accompany the 5 Continental Champions and host. In respect of the Olympic Games, all qualification will be subject to the Qualification System established by the FIH and approved by the International Olympic Committee.

The number of teams participating in each round will be as set out below. In round 1 it is probable that there will be different numbers of teams in different tournaments.

Tournaments in the competition shall be conducted in accordance with the relevant FIH Tournament Regulations in force on the first playing day of the tournament.

The appointment of, or the delegation of appointment of technical officials shall be the responsibility of the FIH.

Competition Entries

Entries will be sought from all eligible National Associations approximately 12 months before the start of the competition.

At the time of seeking entries to the FIH World League, the teams placed 1 – 8 in the FIH World Ranking current at that time will be exempted from rounds 1 and 2. Teams placed 9 – 16 in the World Ranking at the time of seeking entries will be exempt from round 1 of the competition. Although being exempted from the initial rounds, these 16 National Associations must submit an entry form by the required date to FIH.

Method of qualifying for Round 1 and Tournaments Allocations

All eligible National Associations which have not directly qualified for Round 2 or Round 3 will be placed in Round 1 tournaments as decided by the FIH Competitions Committee. In deciding which National Association shall play in which tournament, the Competitions Committee will allocate tournaments on the following principles

1. Low cost to hosts and participating National Associations
 - Regional where possible (not necessarily within own continent);
 - A fair spread of strength as defined by the FIH World Ranking;
 - Minimum number of technical officials and umpires;
 - No obligation of host to have in or out of competition testing for Round 1 tournaments however the FIH reserves the right to test at any event;
 - Tournament Directors and neutral umpires will be appointed from nearby countries and where possible the other technical officials will be locally based;
 - Competing teams will be required to provide an umpire for the tournament and may nominate a technical official as well. Their travel costs will be at the expense of their National Associations.
2. Reduced cost to FIH
 - Joint tournaments where practical;
 - Managed by Continental Federations in co-ordination with the FIH.

The FIH Competitions Committee will determine the number of teams to qualify from Round 1 to Round 2. This will be announced in conjunction with the list of Round 1 tournaments. If the composition of a Round 1 tournament changes after the date of publication, the FIH Competitions Committee will review the revised tournaments and determine the number of teams to qualify from Round 1 to Round 2.

Round 1 dates

Round 1 tournaments will be played in even years and generally immediately following an Olympic Games or FIH World Cup. Where existing tournaments can double up as a Round 1 tournament, they can be used as a World League Round 1 tournament as agreed by the FIH Competitions Committee.

Method of qualifying for Round 2 and Tournaments Allocation

Round 2 of the FIH World League will be played in four tournaments of 6 teams in each.

The National Associations playing in Round 2 will be

- Those teams ranked 9 – 16 in the FIH World Ranking current at the time of seeking entries for the competition;
- The host of the tournament;
- 12/16 teams qualified from Round 1 as specified by FIH Competitions Committee;
- Tournaments will be regionally based and may involve teams from more than one Continental Federation;
- No more than 2 teams ranked between 9 and 16 in the FIH World Ranking current at the time of seeking entries for the competition will be allocated to the same tournament;
- The composition of teams in each of the four Round 2 tournaments will be at the discretion of the FIH Competitions Committee. The factors that will inform that discretion will be as follows: -
 - Cost to competing National Associations;
 - Commercial considerations for FIH;
 - A fair spread of strength as defined by the FIH World Ranking;
 - Intercontinental.

Round 2 hosts

The hosts for Round 2 tournaments will be selected by the FIH Bid Evaluation Panel. National Associations that are hosting Round 2 tournaments will be exempt from Round 1

Round 2 dates

Round 2 tournaments will be played between November in an even year and March in an odd year.

Method of qualifying for Round 3 and Tournaments Allocation

Round 3 of the FIH World League will be played in two tournaments with 8 teams in each.

The National Associations playing in Round 3 will be

- a) Those teams ranked 1 – 8 in the FIH World Ranking current at the time of seeking entries for the competition
- b) The host of the tournament.
- c) 6/8 teams qualified from Round 2. In the case of
 - (i) 6 teams, those qualifying will be the highest placed team in each Round 2 tournament plus the 2 highest placed teams in the FIH World Rankings current at the end of all the Round 2 tournaments of the teams that finish 2nd in the Round 2 tournaments;
 - (ii) 7 teams, those qualifying will be the highest placed team in each Round 2 tournament plus the 3 highest placed teams in the FIH World Rankings current at the end of all the Round 2 tournaments of the teams that finish 2nd in the Round 2 tournaments;
 - (iii) 8 teams, those qualifying will be the two highest placed teams in each Round 2 tournament.
- d) For 2012/13, countries will be placed in one of the two Round 3 tournaments relative to their World Ranking at 1 January 2013 and depending on the dates of the respective Round 2 and Round 3 tournaments. For subsequent competitions, countries will be placed in one of the two Round 3 tournaments as shown below relative to World Rankings current at 1 January of the year in which the tournament is played

Tournament 3A	Tournament 3B
1	2
4	3
5	6
8	7
9	10
12	11
13	14
16	15

(Where 1 is the highest ranked country, 2 the second highest ranked country, 3 the third highest etc.)

Where both hosts are placed in the same tournament, the lower ranked of the two hosts will change places with the country opposite them (e.g. if the lower ranked host is country ranked 9th, it will change places with country ranked 10th)

Round 3 hosts

The hosts for Round 3 tournaments will be selected by the FIH Executive Board at its discretion. The factors that will inform that discretion in order of importance will be as follows: -

- Ability to allocate set dates within the FIH windows at least 4 years in advance;
- World Ranking;
- Commercial considerations for FIH;
- Fair spread of events throughout Continental Federations.

Round 3 dates

Round 3 tournaments will be played between March and June in an odd year before the first of the Continental Championships for that cycle, where practicable.

Method of qualifying for Round 4

Round 4 of the FIH World League will be played in one tournament with 8 teams.

The National Associations playing in Round 4 will be

- a) The host of the tournament.
- b) 7/8 teams qualified from Round 3. In the case of
 - (i) 7 teams, those qualifying will be the 3 highest placed teams in each Round 3 tournament plus the highest placed team in the FIH World Rankings current at the end of all the Round 3 tournaments finishing 4th in the Round 3 tournaments;
 - (ii) 8 teams, those qualifying will be the four highest placed teams in each Round 3 tournament.

Round 4 hosts

The hosts for Round 4 tournaments will be selected by the FIH Executive Board at its discretion. The factors that will inform that discretion in order of importance will be as follows: -

- Ability to allocate set dates within the FIH windows at least 4 years in advance;
- World ranking;
- Commercial considerations for FIH;
- Fair spread of events throughout Continental Federations.

Round 4 dates

Round 4 tournaments will be played between November in an odd year and March in an even year.

Regulations

Tournament Regulations for Rounds 1 and 2 will be the general FIH Tournament Regulations current at the first day of a tournament. Specific Tournament Regulations may be published for Rounds 3 and 4.

Format of Competition

- Round 1 National Associations will be allocated to tournaments on a regional (not necessarily continental basis) in order to minimise costs. Tournament numbers may vary from 3 to 8 teams.
- | No of Teams | Tournament Format |
|-------------|---|
| 3 | Single pool with final between 1 and 2 in pool (no rest day between pool matches and final) |
| 4 / 5 / 6 | Single pool; tournament ranking based on pool ranking, i.e. no classification matches |
| 7 / 8 | 2 pools with full classification matches |
- Each match shall have a result; if the match is tied at the end of regular time, extra time and shoot-outs, if necessary, shall be played.
- Pool composition and match schedules these will be based on the FIH World ranking at 1 January 2012 and at two yearly intervals on the same date thereafter.
- Round 2 Round 2 will comprise 4 tournaments of 6 teams and will be played as a single pool with no classification matches. Allocation of teams to tournaments will be a combination of ranking and regional based tournaments. Each Round 2 tournament will contain no more than 2 of the teams

ranked 9 – 16. Each match shall have a result; if the match is tied at the end of regular time, extra time and shoot-outs, if necessary, shall be played.

Pool composition and match schedules these will be based on the FIH World ranking at 1 January 2012 and at two yearly intervals on the same date thereafter.

Round 3 Round 3 will comprise two tournaments of 8 teams, divided into pools of 4 with full classification matches divided into 2 pools of 4 with full classification matches. Each match shall have a result; if a classification match is tied at the end of regular time, extra time and penalty shoot-outs, if necessary, shall be played.

Pool composition and match schedules these will be based on the FIH World ranking at 1 January 2013 and at two yearly intervals on the same date thereafter.

Round 4 Round 4 will comprise one tournament of 8 teams. Each match shall have a result; if a classification match is tied at the end of regular time, extra time and penalty shoot-outs, if necessary, shall be played.

Pool composition and match schedules these will be based on the FIH World ranking at 1 January 2013 and at two yearly intervals on the same date thereafter.

FIH World Ranking Points

For those teams that do not qualify from Round 1 to Round 2, FIH World Ranking Points will be allocated as follows

Competing in FIH World League	15 points
For winning a match	5 points
For winning a match after extra time or a shoot out	3 points
For losing a match after extra time or a shoot out	2 points

FIH Ranking Points will only be awarded in Round 1 pool matches

The ranking points for FIH Global Events as from 1 January 2012 are shown at Appendix 1.

Note

1. The points allocated in the FIH World League are relative to the existing or historical points allocated to finishing in the Olympic Games and World Cup from positions in the range
2. The points allocated for the teams participating in the Olympic Games and World Cup have been reduced by 25% on average to reflect the fact that the teams qualifying will have played in the FIH World League en route to these events (thus avoiding “double dipping”).
3. The existing points for the Champions Trophy have been retained at similar levels. Champions Challenge has been amended to link to the new 2 year cycle format and the points awarded in the tournament above, whether it be Champions Trophy, Champions Challenge 1 or Champions Challenge 2.

Withdrawals

If a National Association should withdraw from an FIH World League tournament, it may be subject to any or a combination of the following sanctions, depending on which

Round 1	Less than 16 weeks before <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Compensate any financial loss of host- Fine of up to CHF2,000 as determined by the FIH Competitions Committee at its discretion More than 16 weeks before <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Compensate any financial loss of host
Round 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Disqualification from next World Series- Compensate any financial loss of host- Fine of up to CHF15,000 as determined by the FIH Competitions Committee at its discretion- Deduction of World Ranking Points as determined by the FIH Competitions Committee at its discretion
Rounds 3 & 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Disqualification from next World Series- Compensate any financial loss of host- Fine of up to CHF30,000 as determined by the FIH Competitions Committee at its discretion- Deduction of World Ranking Points as determined by the FIH Competitions Committee at its discretion

If any National Association withdraws from a Round 2 tournament, their place will be offered to the next highest placed National Association from the Round 1 tournament where the withdrawing National Association qualified. If this and any subsequent National Association that is offered the place in Round 2 declines and there is no National Association available from the Round 1 tournament, the vacancy will be offered to the next highest placed National Association in the FIH World Rankings current at the time of withdrawal of the original National Association, providing it played in a Round 1 tournament.

If any National Association withdraws from a Round 3 tournament, their place will be offered to the highest World Ranked National Association that has not qualified and who played in Round 2. The relevant World Ranking will be that current at the time of the withdrawal.

Olympic Games and World Cup Qualification

1. The hosts (for Olympic Games this will be subject to the host satisfying FIH and IOC that it is of sufficient standard to play in the tournament);
2. The 5 Continental Champions;
3. The 6 highest placed National Associations in the Round 3 tournaments of FIH World League not qualified under 1 and 2 above.
4. When the host is also the Continental Champion, the 7 highest placed National Associations in the Round 3 tournaments of FIH World League not qualified under 1 and 2 above.
5. In the situation where the last place available is shared between National Associations that finish in the same position in the two different Round 3 tournaments, the National Association to qualify for the Olympic Games or World Cup will be that which has the highest World Ranking current at the time of the completion at the latter of the two Round 3 tournaments.

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Appendix 1

Ranking	OG	World Cup	World League	Champions Trophy	Champions Challenge 1	Champions Challenge 2
1 st	750	750	400	200	130	85
2 nd	650	650	350	180	120	80
3 rd	550	550	325	170	110	75
4 th	450	450	300	160	100	70
5 th	400	400	280	150	95	65
6 th	350	350	260	140	90	60
7 th	300	300	240	130	85	55
8 th	250	250	220	120	80	50
9 th	225	225	200			
10 th	200	200	190			
11 th	180	180	180			
12 th	160	160	170			
13 th			160			
14 th			150			
15 th			140			
16 th			130			
17 th			120			
18 th			115			
19 th			110			
20 th			105			
21 st			100			
22 nd			95			
23 rd			90			
24 th			85			
25 th			80			
26 th			75			
27 th			70			
28 th			65			
29 th			60			
30 th	55					
31 st	50					
32 nd	45					

For those teams finishing in the same place (2nd, 3rd, 4th etc) in the different tournaments in rounds 2 and 3 and not qualifying for the next round, their ranking in the competition and the corresponding FIH World Ranking points will be allocated according to the following criteria:

1. The team with the most wins
2. The team with the greatest positive goal difference
3. The team with the most goals for
4. If still equal then the ranking points available will be averaged